

THE GULL

Golden Gate Audubon Society Berkeley, California Volume 74 Number 11 December 1992

NOW IS THE TIME—

With the election victory of Bill Clinton and Al Gore, habitat, wetlands, endangered species and conservation seem to have won. That does not mean that we can sit back and grin with satisfaction. It is up to us to press for effective protections and environmentally sound development. Letters to the leaders-elect and to our Congressional delegation are most important. It can happen, if we keep up our efforts. See page 197 for a first step in supporting positive change.

THE BIG EVENT OF THE MONTH

Of course—the Christmas Bird Count. It is not too late to get involved in a local team. See page 191.

NEXT MONTH'S MEETING

The January meeting will be in San Francisco at the Randall Museum. Followers of the Observations column will recognize the name of our speaker, Don Schmoldt, a frequent reporter. His subject will be the unique Sutter Buttes. Watch for details in *The GULL* for January.

VOLUNTEERS

The office is now staffed three mornings a week by volunteers who help with answering the phone, stuffing envelopes, running the copying machine, and other helpful and very necessary tasks. Afternoons are open, and one more morning person or two would be most welcome. Can you help?

LEGAL DEVELOPMENTS

Two decisions have advanced cases in which we are active. In the Distribution Center matter, our legal costs are being met under a ruling of Judge Henderson. In the I-80 expansion proceedings we lost when Judge James R. Lambded found for Cal-Trans and removed the injunction he had granted stopping construction; an appeal is the next step.



FIELD TRIPS CALENDAR

Saturday, December 5—Monterey Bay and Coastal Areas. (Don Starks)

Wednesday, December 9—Mini-trip to Lake Merritt. (Wilcox/Spoelman)

For details on the above, see *The GULL* for November.

Sunday, December 20—The Oakland Christmas Count.

Tuesday, December 29—The San Francisco Christmas Count. For information see page 191.

BIRDING ON THE BAY

The San Francisco Bay Oceanic Crew Group has invited members of Bay Area Audubon chapters to a day of Birding on the Bay in their fleet of assorted sized sailboats on Saturday, January 23, 1993. (They will leave from various ports around the bay.) Unfortunately, the invitation came too late for *The GULL* for November, and sign-up is needed by the first week of December.

There is no charge for this outing, and a limited number of participants will be accepted on a first come first served basis. If your copy of *The GULL* arrives on time, and if you're interested, call Russ Wilson (510) 524-2399 for reservations.

Saturday, January 2—Palo Alto Baylands. Meet at 9 a.m. Take Hwy. 101 south to Palo Alto; exit at Embarcadero and drive east toward the airport and Baylands Nature Center. Continue beyond the airport to the duck pond (on the left) and park at the east end. Bring lunch, scopes and clothes appropriate for rain and mud. We should see waterfowl, rails and shorebirds. Leader: Dan Murphy (415/564-0074). (✓)

Wednesday, January 13—Mini-trip to Arrowhead Marsh, Oakland. Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the marsh. Take Hwy. 880 (Nimitz) to the Hegenberger exit. Drive west to Doolittle and turn right. Go a short distance and turn right onto Swan. Turn left after about a block and follow the signs to the marsh. Park in the second parking lot on the left. We will look for waterfowl and shorebirds, and hope for Burrowing Owls. Rain cancels trip. Leaders: Anna Wilcox (510/351-9301) and Jean-Marie Spoelman.

Plan Ahead:

Saturday, January 16—Lodi, Woodridge Rd. & Staten Is. Leader: David Yee.

Saturday, January 16—Carrizo Plain. Leader: Eben McMillan.

Sunday, January 17—Grizzley and Joice Islands Wildlife Area. Leader: Peter Allen.

Saturday, January 30—Panoche Valley. Leader: Chris Carpenter.

Send address changes to office promptly; Post office does not forward *THE GULL*. Monthly meetings: second Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Joint membership — local and national \$30 per year (individual); \$38 (family); includes *AUDUBON* Magazine and *THE GULL*; to join, make checks payable to National Audubon Society and send to GGAS office to avoid delay in receiving *THE GULL*. Membership renewals should be sent directly to the National Audubon office. Subscriptions to *THE GULL* separately \$10 per year; single issues \$1. High school and college student membership \$20 per year. Senior citizen individual \$21, senior citizen family \$23. Associate Membership in Golden Gate Audubon Society, \$10 per year.

The Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. was established January 15, 1917,
and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948.

The *Gull* deadline is the first of the month for the following month, and July 15th for September issue.

Published each month except August by the Golden Gate Audubon Society, office address, 2530 San Pablo Avenue, Suite G, Berkeley, CA 94702. Special third class postage paid in Oakland, CA.
(THE GULL -ISSN 0164-971X)

Sunday, January 31—Los Banos Wildlife Refuge. Leaders: Peter and Dolores White.

For details on above trips see January issue of *The GULL*.

Carpooling arrangements will be attempted for trips marked (✓). If you need a ride or can take a passenger, or if you need information and have difficulty reaching a field trip leader, call Russ Wilson, Field Trips Committee Chairman (510/524-2399).

—FIELD TRIPS COMMITTEE

LAST CALL FOR THE CBC

There is still time to sign up for the GGAS Christmas Bird Counts. The Oakland Count will be held on **Sunday, December 20, 1992**. If you received a sign up form and have not mailed it in, please do so right away. If you did not receive a form, please call the GGAS office, (510) 843-2222 to indicate your interest. Participants at all skill levels are very welcome.

KAY LOUGHMAN,
Compiler, Oakland CBC

The San Francisco Christmas Bird Count is scheduled for **Tuesday, December 29**. Our circle covers the north peninsula from San Bruno to the Golden Gate. Join a team in one of our areas for a full day of birding, help us for a few hours by covering your neighborhood park or square, be a mid-day birder for a few hours in downtown San Francisco, or watch in your backyard for as little as 30 minutes. As always, our boat situation is uncertain so if you can help with a boat please contact Alan Hopkins. Our countdown dinner is planned for the San Francisco County Fair Building (Hall of Flowers).

To sign-up for the count please call me at (415) 564-0074. If you can help with a boat, call Alan Hopkins at (415) 664-0983.

DAN MURPHY, Compiler SF/CBC

OCTOBER OBSERVATIONS

Rare birds are the stuff of this column—what was seen, who saw it, when and where. They are also the substance of birding for many people: some folks do not venture forth unless something of great moment has been reported on the local bird alert; others do not consider a day in the field successful or even worthwhile until they have discovered something out of the ordinary. So be it. . . not everyone gets pleasure from the simple act of being out and about, looking and seeing. Recently, however, several instances have cropped up which pose a bit of an ethical problem: they involve leaders of pre-planned excursions who elect to eschew the published itinerary in favor of chasing a recently-found rarity. In one case, participants of an Audubon-sponsored (not Golden Gate, thank goodness) field trip were invited to accompany the leader in search of the target bird which had been reported about 40 miles from the published field-trip destination. Site fidelity is hardly a requirement for field trip leaders, but there was not unanimity amongst the group and the large leaderless remnant seemed perturbed. The second instance involved a university-sponsored weekend in Monterey where the paid leader abandoned, without announcement, the paying participants on the day of the boat trip in order to chase a desperately-needed list bird. The exchange of money does not sanctify an occasion, but it does signify a contractual arrangement of sorts; there are times when one is unable to fulfill for one good reason or another one's obligations, but a rare bird, although a bolt from the blue, is hardly an Act of God. The "gotta have it and gotta have it now" attitude is intolerable in children and unacceptable in adults; extraordinary ability does not excuse irresponsible behavior.

* * * * *

The monthly report from SE Farallon holds true for the mainland as well: periods of clear, hot weather and periods of dense fog with little in between. It's that in-between part that provides most of the observable migrant fall-out around here, although to be truly unselfish, migrating birds stand a much better chance of survival on clear, moonlit nights when they can stay within sight of the coast, avoiding the open ocean (PP). When daybreak comes, they are able to disperse over a far wider land area, making them more difficult to detect. During the month, large schools of bait fish around SE Farallon produced good numbers of loons, shearwaters, fulmars, gulls and cetacens. Although *El Nino* has supposedly passed, the water temperature on a very birdy pelagic trip beyond the Cordell Bank on November 1 was above 60°, extremely warm. Pelagic birding continued to be excellent: long-distance trips on Oct. 17 and Nov. 1 had a total of **ten Cook's Petrels**, three **Laysan Albatross**, five **Flesh-footed Shearwaters**, two **Long-tailed Jaegers**, six **South Polar Skuas**, five **Xantus' Murrelets** of the southern *hypoleucus* race, and three **Craveri's Murrelets** (THK, RS). By the end of October there were lots of **Northern Fulmars** around; **Black-vented Shearwaters** continued to be seen in record numbers; and **Buller's Shearwaters**, relatively scarce this year, were relatively abundant on Nov. 1 on the Cordell Bank trip. In Monterey Bay on the 24th, an all-dark shearwater without a white flash on the underwings was a prototypical example of a **Short-tailed Shearwater** until the elongated tail drew attention to itself—this well-photographed, dark morph **Wedgetailed Shearwater** is the second record for Monterey Bay and the fourth record for North America (DLSh). A **Wilson's Storm-Petrel** in Monterey Bay on the 17th (fide AR) is one of only a few

records this fall. On the 4th, an adult **Long-tailed Jaeger** with a long tail was spotted flying into San Francisco Bay (JMD). The **Brown Booby** continued to be seen on SE Farallon through the 29th (PP).

Cattle Egrets are beginning to trickle in—five were reported this month (fide RC, RSTh, DES, RS, JMS). Eurasian Wigeons are already being seen in good numbers (mob); a Tufted Duck was reported from San Francisco on the 19th (ARi); there was a total of four **Harlequin Ducks** from the Big Sur River to Point Reyes (RD, JD, GJS, mob); an **Oldsquaw** in Monterey Co. (fide RC); and the season's first **Barrow's Goldeneyes** (ES) and **Hooded Mergansers** (AWi, BiL). Winter is fast upon us. On the 18th, there were individual **Sandhill Cranes** at Bolinas and Point Reyes (KH, JM).

Shorebird-wise, things are slowing down . . . maybe. Up to nineteen **Lesser Golden-Plovers** continued to be seen at Point Reyes (mob) with individual sightings further south along the coast. The **Wilson's Plover**, among the missing for a while, reappeared at Moss Landing State Beach and continued to be seen through the 18th (mob). A **Bartailed Godwit** was found at Bodega Bay on the 26th and was observed through the 28th, a tumor on one leg making its identification easier than normal (TJe, GFi, HCo, SDS). A **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** near Half Moon Bay from the 2nd to the 4th was on non-trespassable private property and visible only from a distance only in the morning (RSTh, mob), but two more at Bodega Bay from the 24th to the 27th were gratifyingly close (DHo, WEH, mob). There were three **Stilt Sandpipers** (NL, fide RC, RJe), a **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** (LLu, mob), and up to four **Ruffs** (RAR, mob) reported through the month. But the plum of the local shorebird season was discovered at

Point Reyes on the 17th amongst the Lesser Golden-Plovers—a **Eurasian Dotterel** (LLu, mob), a molting juvenile that remained through the end of the month to the delight of everyone including, eventually, a bird-watcher from New Jersey who stopped at the sight of so many lined-up telescopes and then had to be convinced that this was a bird worth shimmying under the fence for.

Single White-winged Doves were at Point Reyes on the 17th (BDP) and the Carmel River on the 18th (fide RC). A Red-naped Sapsucker was found in San Francisco on the 9th (MHe); and a Williamson's Sapsucker, generally found only at higher altitudes in the mountains, remained at Tomales Bay State Park through the 25th (ASH, mob). The flycatcher lineup included six Leasts (BD fide ASH, JAnd, BiL, PP); a Dusky (BiL); two Grays (RS, RJR); a Vermilion in Monterey Co. (RC, mob); an Eastern Phoebe at Bodega Bay (DES, JM); twelve Tropical Kingbirds; and a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher at the Big Sur River (fide RC, mob). A **Northern Wheatear** was reported from San Rafael on the 12th (TiB).

On the 13th, a **Gray-cheeked Thrush**, a west-coast rarity and a real skulker, was discovered at Point Reyes; usually a one-day wonder, this one remained until the 15th (RS, mob). There have been good numbers of Varied Thrushes so far this fall—one former Farallon researcher's optimistic theory is that this bodes well for a wet winter (fide PP); SE Farallon had a Brown Thrasher from the 17th to the 23rd; and a Sage Thrasher thru the end of the month (PP). There was a **Red-throated Pipit** at Point Reyes on the 10th and 11th (RS). And some good vireos made heralded appearances: **Yellow-throated** at Stinson Beach (DSi, mob); **Yellow-Green** and Red-eyed at the Carmel

River (RC, BHG fide DR, NL); and White-eyed on SE Farallon (PP).

WARBLERS

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------------|-------------------|
| GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER | | | |
| 1 | 10/10-12 | Stinson Beach | KH,BiL,DSi,EDG,JM |
| TENNESSEE WARBLER | | | |
| 2 | 10/4 | Point Reyes | RS,WEH |
| 1 | 10/5 | Bodega Bay | DN |
| 1 | 10/11 | Carmel | fide RC |
| 1 | 10/25 | SE Farallon | PP |
| NASHVILLE WARBLER | | | |
| 4 total | 10/3-23 | Point Reyes | RS,MH,JM,LLu,AD |
| 2,1 | 10/11,12 | Bodega Bay | RAR,Dash |
| 1 | 10/12 | San Francisco | LLu |
| 1 | 10/24 | Carmel River | NL |
| 1 | 10/25 | SE Farallon | PP |
| 1-2 | 10/27 | San Mateo Coast | AME |
| VIRGINIA'S WARBLER | | | |
| 1 | 9/30-10/1 | San Francisco | BD fide ASH,SGI |
| 1 | 10/4-5 | Bodega Bay | JM,DN,DES |
| 1 | 10/10 | Inverness | AD |
| 1 | 10/14 | San Mateo Coast | BS fide RSTh |
| 1 | 10/20 | San Leandro | JMcS |
| LUCY'S WARBLER | | | |
| 1 | 10/2-4 | Point Reyes | RS,BiL,JM |
| 1 | 10/25-28 | SE Farallon | PP |
| NORTHERN PARULA | | | |
| 1 | 10/6 | San Mateo Coast | GJS fide RSTh |
| CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER | | | |
| 1 | 10/3 | Big Sur River | fide RC |
| 1 | 10/5 | SE Farallon | PP |
| 1 | 10/10 | Point Reyes | fide JM |
| 1 | 10/10-19 | Stinson Beach | mob |
| MAGNOLIA WARBLER | | | |
| 1 | 10/2 | Marin Headlands | IvS |
| 1 | 10/3 | Point Reyes | DGY |
| 1 | 10/8 | San Mateo Coast | RSTh |
| 1 | 10/9-10 | SE Farallon | PP |
| 1 | 10/11 | Bodega Bay | RAR |
| 1 | 10/13 | San Francisco | GT |
| CAPE MAY WARBLER | | | |
| 1 | 10/3 | Point Reyes | BiL |
| BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER | | | |
| 1 | 10/7-17 | Bodega Bay | DN,MiF |
| 1 | 10/10 | Monterey Co. | fide RC |
| 1 | 10/11 | Humboldt Co. | JCS |
| 3 total | 10/25-27 | SE Farallon | PP |
| 1 | 10/26 | Point Reyes | RS |
| BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER | | | |
| 1 | 10/25 | SE Farallon | PP |
| PRAIRIE WARBLER | | | |
| 1 | 10/8 | San Mateo Coast | RSTh |
| 1 | 10/11 | Humboldt Co. | JCS |

PALM WARBLER

| | | | |
|----------|----------|-----------------|--------|
| 20 total | 10/3-31 | SE Farallon | PP |
| 14 total | 10/3-24 | Point Reyes | mob |
| 15 total | 10/8-22 | Monterey Co. | mob |
| 1,1 | 10/11,27 | Bodega Bay | RAR,DN |
| 1 | 10/1 | San Francisco | JSC |
| 4 total | 10/13-26 | Marin Co. | mob |
| 2 | 10/21 | San Mateo Coast | PJM |

BLACKPOLL WARBLER

| | | | |
|---------|----------|-----------------|------------------|
| 1,1 | 10/1,3-6 | Point Reyes | DIW,RS, JM,BK |
| 7 total | 10/2-18 | San Mateo Coast | mob |
| 1 | 10/3 | Bodega Bay | DN |
| 1 | 10/10 | Marin Headlands | MCM |
| 1 | 10/18 | Carmel River | fide RC |

BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER

| | | | |
|---------|---------|-----------------|--------------------|
| 8 total | 10/4-24 | Monterey Co. | fide RC, MiF,NL |
| 1 | 10/18 | San Mateo Coast | DSg |

AMERICAN REDSTART

| | | | |
|---------|------------|-----------------|---------|
| 1 | 10/3 | SE Farallon | PP |
| 6 total | 9/29-10/15 | Point Reyes | mob |
| 1,1 | 10/1,27 | San Mateo Coast | PJM,AME |
| 5 total | 10/8-14 | Monterey Co. | fide RC |
| 1 | 10/11 | Bodega Bay | RAR |

PROTHONOTARY WARBLER

| | | | |
|---|----------|---------------|---------|
| 1 | 10/10-12 | San Francisco | MHe,mob |
|---|----------|---------------|---------|

OVENBIRD

| | | | |
|---|----------|------------|-----------------|
| 1 | 10/11-14 | Bodega Bay | RAR,DASH, DN |
|---|----------|------------|-----------------|

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH

| | | | |
|---------|---------|--------------|-------------|
| 5 total | 10/8-20 | Monterey Co. | fide RC,MiF |
|---------|---------|--------------|-------------|

CONNECTICUT WARBLER

| | | | |
|---|--------|-------------|---------|
| 1 | 10/3-4 | Bodega Bay | RAR,mob |
| 1 | 10/17 | SE Farallon | PP |

HOODED WARBLER

| | | | |
|---|------|---------------|--------|
| 1 | 10/3 | Point Reyes | BiL,RS |
| 1 | 10/4 | San Francisco | LDo |

There were seven Rose-breasted and two Blue Grosbeaks during the month. A Painted Bunting on SE Farallon on the 5th and a Dickcissel on the 1st were noteworthy (PP). Sparrows included twenty-three Clay-colored, one American Tree, five Vesper, one Black-throated and a Harris'. Seventeen Lapland and five Chestnut-collared Longspurs tested the mettle of the grassland searchers at Point Reyes. Bobolinks were reported from Monterey and SF (SRo); and an Orchard Oriole from Point Reyes on the 3rd (BiL, RS). A Cassin's Finch at Point Reyes on the 23rd was another mountain refugee (RS); and up to

twenty Evening Grosbeaks, an eruptive species that is found only sporadically around here, were seen near Point Reyes Station on the 25th and 27th (GB, KH).

We're still reporting the fall migration, but as of this reading, Christmas Bird Counts are upon us. The year inexorably progresses.

OBSERVERS:

Jan Anderson, Dick Ashford, Tim Behr, George F. Bing, Gordon Bryan, Ken Burton, Rita Caratello, Josiah Clark, Harold Connor, J. Scott Cox, J. Michael Danzenbaker, James Danzenbaker (JiD), Barbara Deutsch, Ann Dewart, Jack Dineen, Lily Douglas, Alan M. Eisner, Lee Elias, Carter L. Faust, Mike Feighner, George Finger, Steve Glover, Edward D. Greaves, Kem L. Hainebach, Keith Hansen, W. Edward Harper, Michael Healy, Kevin G. Hints, David Hoffman, Mark Homrighausen, Alan S. Hopkins, Joan M. Humphrey, Tim Jenkins, Bill Keener, Theodore H. Koundakjian, Earl Lebow, Bill Lenarz, Nick Lethaby, Leslie Lieurance, Jim McSharry, Peter J. Metropulos, Mark C. Miller, Joe Morlan, Dan Nelson, Benjamin D. Parmeter, Peter Pyle, Armin Ramel, Robert J. Richmond, Alan Ridley, Mary Louise Rosegay, Steve Rotterborn, Ruth A. Rudesill, Ivan Samuels, Barry Sauppe, Donald E. Schmoldt, Debra Love Shearwater, Dianne Sierra (DSi), Larry Silver, Dan Singer (DSg), Arnold Small, Jean-Marie Spoelman, Rich Stallcup, John C. Sterling, Gary J. Strachan, Emilie Strauss, Steven D. Summers, Scott B. Terrill, Gwen Thole, Ronald S. Thorn, Dolores White, Denise Wight, Anna Wilcox, David G. Yee

—ANN DEWART

RED FOX MENACE

As the native coyote disappears from our coastal wetlands, the introduced red fox is taking its place. This has caused disastrous effects on least tern, snowy plover and other ground nesting birds. In response, the Department of Fish and Game has begun trapping red fox to control their population. However, animal rights advocates are mounting a letter writing campaign opposing trapping. Both Fish and Game and the Governor's office have been barraged with letters objecting to the trapping. In response many Audubon Chapters have sent letters to the Department of Fish and Game, encouraging the department to remove red fox populations as quickly as possible. The Bay Area Audubon Council urges many more letters be sent to counteract the snow-ball effect of the animal-rights activists. If you wish to add your voice, address your letter to:

Boyd Gibbons
1416 Ninth St.
Sacramento, CA 95814

BACK YARD BIRDER

Although the fall count by Golden Gate Raptor Observatory was begun fairly recently at the Marin Headlands, this has become a favorite spot for local and visiting birdwatchers. An avid birder, Carter Faust, had noticed over the years that large numbers of these birds gathered before crossing the straits. In the early 1980's formal counting was begun. It is hoped that over the years information on increases or declines will provide interesting clues to bird populations. In Cape May, N.J. and at Hawk Mountain, PA a decline in Bald Eagles, Osprey and Peregrines was documented during the era of DDT

and subsequently saved these birds from the brink of extinction. Hawk Hill, Hill 129, the Marin Headlands, or whatever you call it, is one more unique spot in our varied birding areas. Like any true treasure hunt you never know what will fly by or over or below your perch atop the southern most tip of Marin. AND the weather is equally capricious.

One October morning on Hawk Hill will forever be in my picture album, the one I keep in my head. I can pull out that picture anytime I want. The morning sun shone warmly, a soft breeze kept us comfortable and there was scarcely a ripple on the calm water between us and the beautiful city across the straits. It was not a busy day, raptor-wise. Even they seemed lazy on this warm day. An occasional voice would call out the sightings. "I. R. T. (immature Red tailed Hawk for us neophytes) coming in from the north." We saw a nice variety, if not huge numbers, of these "treasures": an Osprey, a Cooper's Hawk, a Red-shouldered Hawk, T. V.s (Turkey Vultures), and I. R. T. as well as mature R. T., an American Kestrel, a Northern Harrier and a Sharp-shinned Hawk which stooped at an amazing speed. There were bonus birds up top: Ravens a plenty, Wrentits, Song and White-crowned Sparrows, chickadees, towhees, both jays and Bushtits. Below, in the lagoon we found a rich variety of herons, egrets, sandpipers, pelicans, ducks and cormorants. It was a most satisfying and memorable day.

The next week it was a quite different experience. The lagoon was wonderful again with good sightings of Snipe and a life bird for me, a Pectoral Sandpiper. When we made our way to Hawk Hill a kestrel shot by, otherworldly in the drifting fog. A peek over the edge revealed nothing but white cotton candy

fog obscuring the landscape and seascape. Not even the top of the Golden Gate Bridge poked through. The dedicated volunteers shook their heads sadly as we asked if it might clear. The wind was now blowing so hard the ravens were stalled in mid-air. By one day we had missed seeing a Bald Eagle, many Broad-winged hawks and Merlin. Such are the fortunes of any treasure hunter!

Many raptors migrate from north to south in the fall, seeking better sources of food during the coming winter. Raptors use air movements, especially rising thermals and up-drafts on wind-facing hills in order to maintain altitude and to conserve energy during migration. They are reluctant to fly any long distance over water so they "funnel" into the Hill 129 area to cross the narrow two mile straits. With a good tail wind some birds speed across, others gain altitude before crossing and still others may never cross, affording hawk-watchers pleasure in the valleys below.

Besides the thrill of seeing many different species of raptors at Hawk Hill, you have a unique view of these birds. The sight of a Red-tail from ABOVE, its back intricately-patterned next to its rusty tail, is one more vision for my photo-memory bank. Typical behavior for each species can be seen, such as hovering by kestrels, Northern Harriers and Rough-legged Hawks. The blinding speed of various falcon-types as they stoop or dive from above to attack their prey leaves you awestruck. They reach speeds of 80+ MPH as they rocket with precision toward their prey. Effortless soaring among the buteos makes you wish you could join them.

Whether you visit during the hawk migration or not, the view CAN be spectacular (weather permitting),

geological formations are interesting and there is always fun birding in the lagoon below, if not above. The Golden Gate visitor's center is worth the stop. Grab a friend and explore or re-visit this great spot.

—MEG PAULETICH

BIRDFEEDER PROJECT

Mrs. Muriel Leff, whose efforts to supply San Francisco nursing homes, hospices, and shut-ins with birdfeeders we told you about in *The GULL* for November (p. 180), tells us that volunteers have responded, but more are needed. In a future issue we'll have reports of some of the experiences she and her helpers have had.

In the meantime, call her (415) 221-9988, if you would like to help. Contributions in support of this program may be made by sending a check payable to GGAS (and thus, tax deductible) and identified as "Feeder Project." She has placed both seed and hummingbird feeders, and is working on plans to keep them in service. Your help is invited.

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

January 14 in San Francisco

Don Schmoldt on the Sutter Buttes

February 11 in Berkeley

Mike Rigney on Riparian Corridors through Urban Deserts

March 11 in San Francisco

Leslie Grilla on Natural History of Marine Mammals and the Marine Mammal Center

April 8 in Berkeley

Not yet confirmed

May 8 in Berkeley

Dr. Steve Laymon on Biology Research Projects of the Kern River Research Center

ARMCHAIR ACTIVIST EASY, EFFECTIVE RESULTS

Letters and phone calls to government officials—simple and effective methods for citizen action form the basis of a new Audubon program, the Armchair Activist.

Since its inception in 1989 the Armchair Activist has proven successful in dozens of Audubon chapters around the country.

Golden Gate Audubon is now joining in the combined effort. Volunteers are invited to participate in this satisfying and worthwhile project.

Armchair Activist activities are designed to consume a minimal amount of time for the participant. Anyone can join, friends, family, co-workers and students. Signing up is as simple as a telephone call to the GGAS office at (510) 843-2222.

The Armchair Activist program "was designed to make it easy for people to take action without demanding too much of their time," said the temporary coordinator, Paula Kleintjes. The program has two components: the Letter of the Month Club and the Telephone Rapid Response Team.

The Letter of the Month Club requires less than one hour per month. The only expense is for postage and stationery. Participants write one letter per month to elected officials on topics which include local, state and federal issues. A summary of the topic is sent to volunteers, along with an explanation of current legislation and a sample letter. Past issues have included oil spill liability, clean air, wetlands protection, and old-growth forest protection.

The Telephone Rapid Response Team requires only an occasional phone call. As a member of the team, you stand ready to call government officials on short notice to voice a timely opinion on environmental issues. Calls

may be to local, Sacramento, or Washington, D.C. offices. Participants also agree to call up to two other Audubon volunteers in a "phone tree."

Well-timed letters and phone calls have proven their effectiveness in the public decision-making process. With the Armchair Activist, Auduboners have an opportunity to focus their efforts on the proper issue, at the proper time, to the proper government official. To sign up, contact the GGAS office.

But the Conservation Committee Chairman cannot do this job indefinitely. We need a volunteer coordinator to come forward and take the lead. Will you consider it? Phone Arthur for more information.



ENVIRONMENTAL SYMPOSIUM

The annual symposium in Sacramento sponsored by the Planning and Conservation League is scheduled for Saturday and Sunday, January 9 and 10. It will be at the Sacramento City College, 3835 Freeport Blvd., Sacramento. Registration is available January 9 if space allows; early bird registrations receive a \$10 discount. For information call Lindy Rodgers, (916) 444-8726, ext. 7. This symposium attracts a large participation of activists and legislators and agency people.

LETTER

Piedmont, California

I concur with John Jenks of Berkeley that the entire Audubon Society should be picking up, not slowing down efforts pertaining to our population growth problem. Please resume!

Sincerely,
—POLLY REICH

PART OF THE EQUATION

Every day I meet people who share my concerns regarding overpopulation. Frequently, many go so far as to say that population is the root of all our environmental troubles. I'm certainly thrilled that a message is getting out. Still, I don't feel that we are right to call overpopulation the sole cause of our world's woes.

The growth of our world's population is so fast that blame is almost inescapable. Consider that the population clock is now ticking away at 5,496,301,614 people. Yet, for a newsletter nine months ago, I quoted a count of merely 5,426,165,626 people. Nine months: 70 million people.

A broader picture comes to us in facts like this one quoted from Paul Harrison's recent *The Third Revolution*: "If our consumption and waste output levels do not change, the 57.5 million extra Northerners expected during the 1990's will pollute the globe more than the extra 911 million Southerners."

If we neglect the role of consumption patterns in determining the fate of our environment, we not only miss a major factor, we miss the point. Population and consumption are together part of the equation.

The question then becomes: What is the equation? I would propose this:

$$\text{Degradation} = \frac{\# \text{ of People (Consumption + Production)}}{\text{Carrying Capacity}}$$

What this equation tells us is that we cause environmental degradation through what we consume and produce, multiplied by how many we are, mitigated by the land's innate ability to support us.

We can't simply plug numbers into this equation. However, we can easily use it to discern trends. For example, a person in San Diego, would have a greater environmental impact than a person in an African semidesert, by virtue of the fact that the Californian would consume more resources and produce more pollution.

If we chose to believe this equation, there are several conclusions we can draw immediately. We know that we can't talk about overpopulation without looking at consumption and the land's ability to support us.

—NIKOS KREBIEL-BOUTIS

Audubon Population Program Quarterly Bulletin

SANCTUARY RESIDENT MANAGER WANTED

San Diego Audubon Society is searching for a resident manager for its Silverwood Wildlife Sanctuary. Located at Lakeside, CA, near El Cajon Mountain and adjacent to the Barona Indian Reservation, the sanctuary is owned and operated by the San Diego Audubon Society, Inc.

The position is without formal salary, but includes a small monthly stipend. A 700 square foot on-site residence is provided with utilities. The ideal person for this position is retired and/or is able to devote a full workweek on the premises. The manager should have a strong interest in natural history, enjoy working with people, and believe in the Audubon mission. He or she should

possess, or be willing to acquire quickly a basic knowledge of chaparral plants, wildlife and ecology. The position's responsibilities include fulltime management of the Sanctuary leading nature walks, supervising visitors on Sundays, and coordinating nature education programs at the Sanctuary.

The Sanctuary consists of over 700 acres of oak and chaparral habitat, and is one of the oldest and largest chapter-owned Audubon sanctuaries in California. Elevations range from 1500 to over 3100 feet. There is a paved road to the resident manager's house, but most of the rest of the preserve is reached by walking and hiking trails; there is no overnight camping. The Sanctuary is open to Audubon members on Wednesday, to the general public on Sundays,

and to special groups by appointment on other days.

Interested persons should send a resume, names and phone numbers of three references, and a letter indicating the reasons for interest in the position, to Philip R. Pride, Chairman of the Silverwood Committee, San Diego Audubon Society, 5377 Redding Rd., San Diego CA 92115. Initial screening will commence on or around Dec. 31, 1992. For information you may call Philip Pride at (619) 594-5525 (days) or (619) 583-8966 (evenings).

WHERE WE HAVE BEEN

As part of our 75th Anniversary Preparations we found ourselves looking over our past. We found, to our pleasure, that GGAS has every reason to be proud of our conservation accomplishments over the last ten or

fifteen years (and more but our institutional memory gets blurry further back). We'd like to present to you a short and very incomplete account of our last fifteen years of conservation activities.

GGAS has played an instrumental role in many Conservation battles:

We played a major role in the Mono Lake fight, raising tens of thousands of dollars when the Mono Lake Committee was first being established and was desperate for funds. Over our many years of involvement in the fight to save Mono Lake, our fundraising efforts have exceeded well over \$100,000, providing funds for both the Mono Lake Committee and for National Audubon's share in the legal costs of this struggle.

In 1977, GGAS sought to bring the Emeryville Crescent into public ownership. Although this effort failed, our

GIFTS and BEQUESTS

FOR GGAS

Gift of
Elinor Potter
Francis Rubenstein

In Memory of

Laura Silberstein
Yvonne Kirchenbauer

The Society welcomes gifts in general or gifts in honor of or in memory of relatives and friends. Such gifts will be used as specified by the donor or, if unspecified, at the discretion of the GGAS Board of Directors. This includes their use for general GGAS activities or for special programs of the Society including Audubon Canyon Ranch of which GGAS is a sponsor. Please send your gift in the form of a check made out to Golden Gate Audubon Society, 2530 San Pablo Avenue, Suite G, Berkeley, CA 94702. All gifts are tax deductible. The Society is also appreciative of any bequests. Such bequests should specify as recipient the Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. All gifts, donations and bequests will be acknowledged in *The Gull* as well as personally on behalf of the Society by the Secretary.

concern was clear for the fate of this important marsh and GGAS contracted with the Bodega Bay Institute to have an Environmental Assessment performed to document the values of the marsh.

This document has proved to be an invaluable tool for holding off development, trails, and highway expansions, all of which were attempted (Santa Fe RR's planned development, an extension of the Bay Trail through the Crescent, the expansion of HWY I-80—the latter a battle right now in litigation) and all of which were thwarted through the efforts of GGAS. Through our efforts, the Crescent remains one of the most spectacular marshes on the Bay.

GGAS fought long and hard to preserve San Leandro Bay. We lost many battles as witnessed by the Oakland Airport and Harbor Bay Island, all built on former marshes (before we had a Clean Water Act that would have made such losses more difficult). But in the 1980's when the remnants of these marshes were threatened, GGAS led numerous lawsuits that saved 480 acres of seasonal wetlands on the Oakland Airport and 90 acres of seasonal wetlands at the Oakland Distribution Center next to Arrowhead Marsh. The fate of the latter site is still not settled although we have won three court cases over this wetland. We hope ultimately to convince the Port to restore the wetlands it has destroyed at the Distribution Center Site and to create Clapper Rail habitat for this fast disappearing species.

As part of these wetland battles, GGAS played a key role in having an influential study done (which we helped to write) on wetland losses around the Bay entitled "Endangered Habitat, SF Bay Seasonal Wetlands." National

Audubon helped significantly in funding this project.

In the late 1980's GGAS played a leading role in preventing U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service upper management from abusing the Endangered Species Act. Through our use of action alerts and our stubborn insistence on good science being the basis for Endangered Species Act decisions we reined in errant federal appointees.

Because of our very active role in the issue of water diversions (i.e. our northern Sierra waters going to agriculture and Southern California) GGAS was picked to be the lead plaintiff in the environmental community's lawsuit against the State Water Resources Control Board. This suit was necessitated by the Water Board adopting a Water Quality Plan that will lead to the ultimate extinction of several fish species, in addition to other environmental impacts. Previous to this lawsuit we, with the other Bay Area Audubon Chapters, obtained funding so that a study could be done on the impacts of water diversions on wildlife in the San Pablo and Suisun Bays.

Finally, by donating seed money to various Federal and local agencies GGAS was instrumental in the acquisitions of the Marin Islands, Cullinan Ranch and the Marathon Property. Over 1800 acres of wetlands, endangered species habitat and heron rookeries are now preserved in perpetuity thanks to our actions.

GGAS has a proud record in helping to preserve our natural resources and wildlife and in advancing the Audubon Cause. It is only with your help that we have been so successful and it is only with your future help that we will be able to continue our efforts. Thanks for your continued support.

—ARTHUR FEINSTEIN

San Francisco *Estuary Project*

The Project is a good source for dependable information about the SF Bay and the estuary. Two recent publications, available on request from the Project are:

Status and Trends Report on Land Use and Population—This STR quantifies the historical, current, and projected future land use patterns in the watershed area draining into the Estuary, including both the Bay and Delta.

The Effects of Land Use Change and Intensification on the San Francisco Bay Delta Estuary—This report uses a computer-based geographic information system to arrive at plausible pollutant loadings due to increased urban run-off and to estimate the amount of wetlands and streams impacted by future land use change. The analysis of two future land use scenarios indicates that thousands of acres of wetlands and substantial increases in pollutants will likely result from anticipated land use changes. The report also identifies potential changes in land use controls that would help reduce these impacts.

The Project also offers educational programs, the two most recent are:

Estuary Outreach—The Estuary Outreach program brings SFEP staff to the classroom for a two-hour session with teachers and students. Sessions are activity oriented and build on educator workshops. Staff can assist educators in using SFEP's and other Bay-Delta organizations' materials with current lesson plans, conduct activities with students, and provide informative presentations on current issues. For

more information, please call (510) 464-7997.

Estuary Action Challenge—SFEP is offering the Estuary Action Challenge to Bay- and Delta-area schools. The Challenge involves both field trips and classroom activities. This program is available at introductory rates. For more information, please call Mandi J. Billinge, Estuary Action Challenge Coordinator, at (510) 464-7997.

WHAT THE BOARD DID

The October meeting of the board of directors was concerned with plans for the Oakland and San Francisco Christmas Bird Counts, with a review of the 75th Anniversary Celebration, with the prudent investment of funds, with long range plans and with an astonishing number of conservation committee concerns:

The Neotropical Migratory Bird Conference

The Toll Road legal maneuvers

The Delta Smelt 60-Day Notice

The I-80 law suit

The Distribution Center lawsuit

The CBE San Jose Non-compliance lawsuit

The Armchair Activist Program and how to use it to the fullest

Burrowing Owl concerns

BOOK FOR SALE

For the collector, an opportunity: *The Birds of California*, by William Dawson and illustrated chiefly by Major Allen Brooks, three volumes, the Student's Edition, South Moulton Co., 1923. This set is offered for sale at \$200 by GGAS. It was received as a gift to be used for the benefit of the chapter. May be seen at the GGAS office.

NEWS FROM OUR RANCH

Audubon Canyon Ranch (415) 868-9244
Shoreline Hwy., Stinson Beach, CA 94970
Wildlife Sanctuaries & Centers for Nature Education
under joint sponsorship of Golden Gate, Madrone, Marin
and Sequoia Audubon Societies

Gary Holloway, President

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SEASON'S GREETINGS

This column seems to focus a lot on the celebration of seasons. We celebrated the seasons of the calendar, the seasons of migration, nesting, wildflowers, and weather. But we celebrate the holiday season too, and all of us who are associated with Audubon Canyon Ranch wish you and yours a very happy holiday season, and a prosperous and successful new year. If you are in west Marin on a weekday afternoon, stop by the Ranch and pick-up one of those very special holiday gifts. The Ranch store will be open from 1 until 4 p.m. Tuesday through Friday.

HERONRY CELEBRATION

Helen Pratt has been celebrating heronry successes at ACR for 26 years now. This year, with the help of Tom Queer, she reported 9 Great Blue Heron nests, all of which were successful. Nineteen young herons were fledged from the colony at the Ranch. Great Egrets experienced an excellent success rate for the 97 reported nests with about 170 young fledged. Three of the four Snowy Egret nests which were found were successful. Owl predation was minimal, the eagle didn't return, the collars on the trees kept raccoons out of the trees, El Nino seems to have had no impact. No wonder we have reason to celebrate. Thanks so much to Helen and Tom for their efforts in monitoring our heronry.

CELEBRATE WITH US

Guided Nature Walks at the Bouverie Audubon Preserve: Saturdays, Jan. 9, Feb. 13, March 13 and 27 from 9:30 to 1:30. Celebrate a walk through the lovely Bouverie Audubon Preserve led by one of our BAP docents. Reservations are taken at the beginning of the month preceding the walk. Register early at (707) 938-4554.

Registration for the following programs may be made by calling (415) 868-9244.

Ranch Guide Training: Saturdays, Feb. 6–March 13 at the Bolinas Lagoon Preserve. You can't celebrate more than this. You'll be in on the ground floor for next year's celebration of the entire public season at ACR by joining our ranch guide class of '93. You will need more information about this celebration so please call us.

Coastal Prairie Restoration Day: Saturday, Jan. 16 at Cypress Grove. Celebrate the restoration of our native grasslands by lending a hand with our winter planting program. It's free and you might get wet, but you'll have reason to celebrate your contribution to our natural heritage for years to come.

The Experts Talk Ticks: Friday evening, Feb. 26 at Bolinas Lagoon Preserve. Ok, you think you've got me with this one, but for 5 bucks you may very well be celebrating NOT getting lime disease with the information you will pick-up in this special symposium.

—DAN MURPHY

THE GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON

SOCIETY offers many opportunities to meet fellow members and supporters and to advance the Audubon Cause. Make time to take part in the affairs of your society. Here are a few examples for which you might volunteer:

- () Birdseed Sales
- () Weekend Greeter at
Audubon Canyon Ranch
- () Help in the office: 3 hours
per week or so
- () Monthly meeting greeter
() SF () Berkeley
- () Christmas Count
- () April Birdathon
- () Letter writing
- () Helping at GGAS booth at
special events
- () Help in a pinch: volunteer pool
- () Data entry in office computer
- () Help with food for special
events
- () Fundraising
- () Illustrations for *The GULL*
- () Articles for *The GULL*

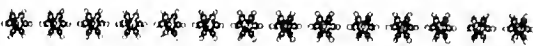
If you could help, please check items of interest and return this form to GGAS. We will use this information only to follow up on your offer of help.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: () _____

Comments are invited, please use a separate sheet of paper. If you have questions call the office, 510-843-2222.



Holiday Quiz:

*What's fun, easy to do,
effective, satisfying, and
can be done from the comfort
of your home in about a half an
hour a month?*



answer:

*Audubon's Armchair Activist At Home
Action for Environmental Protection...*



**Join the Letter of the Month Club
or give a gift subscription
to a friend**

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Address: _____

City: _____

State, Zip _____

Home Phone (____) _____

Enclosed: \$6.00 min. (helps with postage
and production)

Other amount \$ _____

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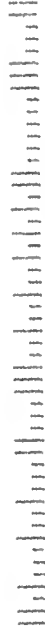
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